

# **DOE TECHNICAL STANDARDS PROGRAM PROCEDURES**

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## **TECHNICAL STANDARDS PROGRAM TOPICAL COMMITTEES**

U.S. Department of Energy  
Office of Nuclear Safety Policy and Standards  
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## 1. SCOPE

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### 1.1 Purpose

This procedure describes how topical committees are organized and recognized under the Technical Standards Program.

### 1.2 Applicability

This procedure applies to all DOE Headquarters and field organizations, management and operating contractors, and laboratories (hereafter referred to collectively as "DOE Components") working to the latest revision of DOE Order 252.1, "Technical Standards Program."

## 2. ORGANIZATION OF TOPICAL COMMITTEES

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### 2.1 Need

Topical committees (sometimes referred to as technical committees) provide a venue and focal point for DOE and DOE contractor subject matter experts (SMEs) to participate in and coordinate technical standards activities with their DOE peers, counterparts in other Federal agencies and industry, and with national and international Standards Development Organizations (SDOs). Topical Committees may be called on to address technical issues related to their areas of interest within DOE. They can also provide a path for technology transfer from the DOE to U.S. industry.

Furthermore, DOE Topical Committees provide the means for DOE to conform with certain Federal requirements and policy.

*Public Law (PL) 104-113*—Federal requirements in PL 104-113, the "National Technology Transfer and Advancement Act of 1995," signed by President Clinton on March 7, 1996, directs federal agencies to work with Standards Development Organizations to develop or adopt voluntary (i.e., non-Government) standards, rather than to develop technical standards internally.

*Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-119*—OMB A-119 sets federal policy requiring the use of existing voluntary standards in lieu of internal (DOE) technical standards, and working with non-Government standards bodies to develop new or revised voluntary standards as they are needed.

*Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board (DNFSB) Recommendation 91-1*—Implementation of DOE commitments made to the DNFSB under Recommendation 91-1, "Strengthen Nuclear Safety Standards Program" is supported by the organization of the Department's subject matter experts into discrete technical

working groups (i.e., topical committees), and help the TSP maintain openness, balance of interest, and due process in its procedures. Topical Committees also help ensure that the individuals who participate in DOE Technical Standards development are experienced, technically qualified and competent.

Topical Committees provide a venue for cooperation and coordination among DOE's subject matter experts that can provide a ready technical resource and corporate memory that can survive reorganizations, rightsizing, and mission and function changes.

## 2.2 Organization Principles

The following principles characterize the operations of topical committees recognized by the Technical Standards Program.

*Openness*—Participation in the standards development process is open to all DOE and DOE contractor individuals who are directly and materially affected by the activity in question. Charters (see section 4.3) may also be extended to other Federal agencies, industry, and SDOs as long as DOE interests are fully represented.

*Balance of Interest*—The consensus body responsible for the development of a standard is composed of a balance of representatives of all categories of interest that relate to the subject.

*Due Process*—A procedure exists by which any individual or organization who believes that an action or inaction of a third party causes unreasonable hardship or potential harm is provided the opportunity to have a fair hearing of his/her concerns.

Topical committees can be established and maintained on an ad hoc basis, depending on work needs. They generally "serve as needed", and are subject to "sunset reviews" to preclude unnecessary longevity. These committees are intended to provide a focus for participation in technical standards activities of generic interest or applicability to Department operations; they are not intended or authorized to assume or usurp the functions and responsibilities of line organizations. However, line organizations may call upon topical committees when the need for subject matter expert assistance in a topical committee's technical area is identified.

## 2.3 Member Qualifications

Participants in topical committees should be "qualified" where qualifications are defined in terms of education, experience, training, and special requirements (e.g., license) necessary for the performance of assigned responsibilities as in ANSI/ANS-3.1-1993 (R1999), "Selection, Qualification and Training of Personnel for Nuclear Power Plants."

For example, independent review organization members such as those in topical committees would have the following minimum qualifications:

*Education*—Baccalaureate in engineering or related science.

*Experience*—Professional experience in the area of expertise of 5 years and 6 years for committee chairperson(s).

*Special requirements*—An individual performing reviews may possess competence in more than one specialty area. Requisite experience may have been gained concurrently in related specialty areas.

*Training*—Training shall be for periods of time sufficient to develop the proficiency required when comparing the individual's experience and knowledge to the task analysis.

*Organization* - DOE should be represented among the primary members, chairpersons, and steering committee members, however, membership is open to others where it benefits the interests of DOE and the Federal government (to include observers, industry affiliates, agency counterparts, etc, as outlined in each charter).

## **2.4 Technical Standards Program Recognition**

Topical committees and Chairpersons/key members are listed on the Technical Standards Program Home Page [at <http://tis.eh.doe.gov/techstds/>], with links to related Home Pages, and included in the latest edition of DOE-TSL-2, *Directory of Points of Contact for the DOE Technical Standards Program*.

# **3. EXPECTATIONS FOR ACTIVITIES OF TOPICAL COMMITTEES**

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## **3.1 Preparing Activity**

Topical committees may be assigned or accept responsibility for developing and updating DOE Technical Standards, coordinating DOE Technical Standards with the support of the Technical Standards Manager(s), and maintaining DOE Technical Standards. In general, the Technical Standards Manager for the same organization as the committee chairperson will serve as the Technical Standards Manager for that topical committee.

Topical committees serve as the focal point for DOE Technical Standards issues and provide the means to define the Department-wide position on candidate standards or standards in comment coordination.

Topical committees work with counterpart federal agencies and agency topical committees to establish government-wide positions for technical issues on proposed topical standards.

Topical committees coordinate with counterpart national and international Standards Development Organizations to support the development and dissemination of standards needed by DOE.

Topical committees coordinate proposed DOE and voluntary consensus standards as described in paragraph 2.7 of DOE-TSPP-1.

### 3.2 Review Activity

Topical committees review proposed technical standards and submit comments through the Technical Standards Manager as described in paragraph 2.8 of DOE-TSPP-1.

### 3.3 Technical Reviews

In the conduct of technical reviews of new/revised technical standards and standardization issues in their area of expertise, topical committees are expected to:

- Resolve comments raised during the development and formal coordination of technical standards prepared by the committee;
- Submit the proposed standard(s) to the senior line manager of the committee chairperson for approval; and
- Establish and maintain liaison with other topical committees (DOE, Federal, and non-Government) having mutual interests. The committee shall advise other DOE topical committees on the preparation of standards related to their area of expertise and the correlation/consolidation of similar standards prepared by these committees, and promote cooperation between the committees in areas of common interest.
- Provide technical peer review for issues in dispute or in need of verification.

### 3.4 Interface with Voluntary Standards Organizations

Topical committees form direct ties with counterpart Standards Development Organization (SDO) committees, subcommittees, and working groups (also referred to as non-Government standards bodies) to participate in the development and review of international and national standards of relevance to DOE operations. A listing of "adopted" voluntary standards (the voluntary standards of primary interest to DOE because of their reference in DOE directives and contract documents) and the addresses of SDOs for those standards can be found in the latest edition of DOE-TSL-1, *Department of Energy Standards Index*. Topical committees should consult the latest edition of DOE-TSL-4, *Directory of DOE and Contractor Personnel Involved in Non-Government Standards Activities*, to determine which SDO committee would likely be interested in accepting a project to convert a DOE Technical Standard. Using DOE-TSL-4, topical committees can identify the person who is the DOE representative on the appropriate SDO committee, subcommittee, or working group and obtain the name and telephone number of the chairperson of the appropriate SDO group.

### **3.5 Reporting of Committee Activities/Membership**

The chairperson of the topical committee submits a report to the committee at each regular meeting covering progress of work and recommended actions. Dissenting members have the right to submit minority reports, individually, or jointly for consideration at the time the majority report is acted upon.

## **4. GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR ESTABLISHING TOPICAL COMMITTEES**

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### **4.1 Determination of Interest**

Topical committees are usually formed at the direction of DOE management in response to an identified need. However, an individual or group of individuals who (a) share a common interest and have related professional expertise, and (b) believe their area of expertise has a generic applicability to DOE operations can initiate action (subject to the approval of their line management) to establish a new topical committee. Existing topical committees [e.g., Special Interest Groups (SIGs) under the Training Resources and Data Exchange (TRADE) organization] can be readily recognized under the Technical Standards Program process; ad hoc working groups desiring to maintain their contacts for work-related purposes can also be recognized under this process. Where line management agrees to support this type of initiative, the interested subject matter expert(s) makes a search within DOE for other potential participants in the topical committee. The Technical Standards Program Office should be consulted to assist in this effort.

### **4.2 Announcement of Intentions**

After completing the search for potential committee participants, the interested subject matter expert(s) should:

- Develop and circulate a statement of scope and purpose for the prospective topical group,
- Make contacts and develop plans for establishing a topical committee, through such means as an organizational meeting/workshop or related communications, and
- Identify needs and issues for the prospective committee to address through the preparation and distribution of a questionnaire/survey to assist in defining the committee's organizational agenda.

### **4.3 Establishment of Initial Organization**

Through an organizational meeting/workshop or other means, the topical committee participants should work to formulate a charter for the committee (example charter provided in Attachment A), define responsibilities, elect officers, and establish

guidelines for the scheduling and conduct of meetings. A summary of the organizational effort (e.g., minutes of the meeting/workshop), including the proposed committee charter, should be sent to the participants and the Technical Standards Program Office.

**NOTE:** “Forming a DOE Topical Committee: A How-To Manual,” July 4, 1997 (prepared by Sandia National Laboratories), provides guidance on how to design a workshop that would produce a committee to reflect the concerns and interests of a specific topical area. Individuals interested in obtaining a copy of this document should contact the Technical Standards Program Office.



**ATTACHMENT A****EXAMPLE CHARTER OF A TOPICAL COMMITTEE****PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Metrology Committee is to ensure integrity of measurements and promote the science of measurements for DOE Programs by:

- 1) Identifying and resolving metrology issues for DOE,
- 2) Spearheading DOE metrology efforts, and
- 3) Serving as a topical committee on metrology for the Technical Standards Program.

**VALUE STATEMENT**

The Metrology Committee will promote a coordinated Metrology Program for DOE; provide a network for sharing information and resources; and encourage high-quality, cost-effective metrology services for DOE Programs.

**OBJECTIVES**

- 1) Function as the DOE focal point for metrology issues and standards.
- 2) Function as a Preparing Activity in metrology for the DOE Technical Standards Program Office.
- 3) Serve as an advisory group for the development and review of DOE Metrology directives.
- 4) Partner and interface with non-DOE standards bodies.
- 5) Maintain a partnership with the National Institute of Standards and Technology.
- 6) Promote DOE-wide "best" metrology practices.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in the DOE Metrology Committee is open to all DOE and DOE contractors involved with measurements, standards, and calibration.

**ATTACHMENT A****EXAMPLE CHARTER OF A TOPICAL COMMITTEE***(continued)***STEERING COMMITTEE**

The DOE Metrology committee will be governed by an elected Steering Committee consisting of up to ten members. A secretariat will be selected to coordinate the Metrology Committee activities.

**SPONSORSHIP**

The DOE Metrology Committee, formed in August 1996, is a standing topical standards committee sponsored by the DOE Technical Standards Program. The following principals will govern the operation.

- 1) Openness: Participation in committee standards development process will be open to all persons who are directly and materially affected by the activity in question.
- 2) Balance of Interests: Any standards development activities undertaken by the committee will be comprised of representatives of all categories of interest that relate to the subject matter.
- 3) Due Process: The committee will ensure that any individual or organization within DOE who believes that an action or inaction of the committee causes unreasonable hardship or potential harm is provided the opportunity to have a fair hearing of their concerns.
- 4) Reporting: The Steering Committee will report on Metrology Committee activities to the DOE Technical Standards Program Office on a regular basis.

**MEETINGS**

The Committee normally meets once a year. The meeting will normally be hosted by a DOE facility.

**SUNSET REVIEW:**

The Committee will review the Charter every four years from the date of the founding of the Committee, or upon need, to either validate the continuation of the Topical Committee, or to arrange termination of the Charter and the Committee's activities.

**SIGNATURES/DATES:** DOE TECHNICAL STANDARDS PROGRAM MANAGER, DOE TOPICAL COMMITTEE CHAIR/SENIOR REPRESENTATIVE, ORGANIZATIONAL SPONSOR (IF PERTINENT)



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